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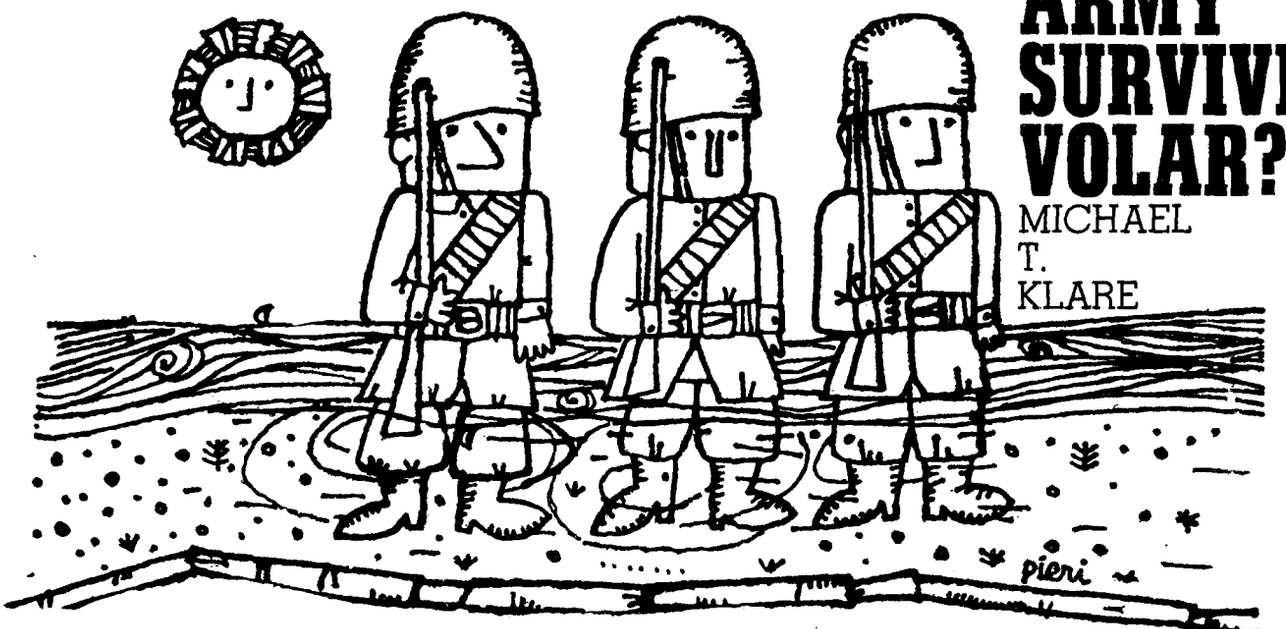
Fiftieth Anniversary Year

CAN THE ARMY SURVIVE VOLAR?

MICHAEL T. KLARE



BIG STEP IN IRELAND
JOHN COONEY

NUCLEAR PRO AND CON
ALAIN WOODROW

LANCE, SPIRO & VIGILANTES
PETER STEINFELS

'RELIGIOUS AMERICA'
MICHAEL MURRAY

FISH STORY
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

ABORTION: AN ECUMENICAL DILEMMA

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NEWS & VIEWS

A Year for Sisters?

In his crystal-balling of 1974 for the newsletter *Overview,* priest-psychologist Eugene Kennedy predicts that women religious will emerge from the year with a clearer identity of who they are.

"They will take encouragement from Pope Paul's symbolic reception of Betty Friedan," he wrote, "and begin to capitalize on this in a more effective manner."

"One hesitates to say it," Father Kennedy continued, "but instead of modeling themselves on some of the men's organizations within the church, they will become clearly feminine in their ways of dealing with problems. More self-confident, they will be more positive and less defensive about their role in the church."

If part of this "coming into their own" involves the winning of more responsible posts in the American ecclesiastical establishment, the sisters have a lot of male resistance to overcome. You could presume that from the most casual of observations. But now there's something more authoritative to lean on: a survey on the role of women religious, sponsored by the Center of Concern in Washington, an independent ecumenical organization.

Conducted by Sister Janet Walton of Albany, the survey found that while sisters outnumber priests by ratios of 4-to-1 and 5-to-1 in many dioceses, priests outnumber sisters in decision-making roles by ratios of as much as 10-to-1.

In the Diocese of Albany, for instance, only one of the 35 top decision-making positions is held by a woman.

"We found that women nearly always hold subsidiary positions in diocesan work," said Sister Walton, "even though they are often better qualified than the men who hold the top positions."

In addition to Albany, a task force coordinated by Sister Walton studied the diocesan bureaucracies of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Baltimore, St. Louis, Bridgeport, Louisville and New York.

"Almost all the dioceses had the same proportions of men to women as did Albany," Sister Walton commented. "There were no significant differences. We found no one diocese singularly determined to give women real leadership positions."

The survey's findings led to an inescapable conclusion: "Present staffing trends on the diocesan level show a strong clerical bias—and injustice toward women religious."

Punting With Gerry

Along with the rest of the country, *Boston Globe* columnist George Frazier has suffered the jock vocabulary of the Nixon Administration—the rah-rah remembrances of touchdown past that translate to "game plans" and a lexicon of athletic expressions. We all have our tolerance points, and Frazier passed his at the recent Hall of Fame football dinner featuring an ex-Big Ten center and a playmaker from Hollywood. Frazier speaking:

"Certainly few events of recent years have been as revolting as . . . when Gerald Ford and John Wayne opened their mouths. Since I'm not an admirer of either man's prose, you must forgive my not quoting them precisely. However, I think you'll get the general idea when I report that at one point Ford talked about an old Whittier benchwarmer who in the past five years has had more than his share of third-down-and-long-yardage situations and has coped with them gallantly. Good God, this man is now the Vice-President of the United States! Unbelievable. Absolutely un-bee-leeeve-able! As for the Duke—but not while you're eating, right? When Thurber lampooned this sort of nonsense in *The Male Animal* it seemed a little farfetched, but listening to Ford and Wayne the other night, you suddenly realized that Thurber had been the soul of understatement. Ah, well."

Priest-Guerrilla

According to Latinamerica Press, a Spanish priest, Father Domingo Lain, has emerged as the "brains" of the guerrilla movement in Colombia. Lain catapulted into the intellectual leadership of the guerrillas several weeks ago after the Colombian army killed guerrilla chieftains Manual and Antonio Vasquez Castano and captured theoretician Ricardo Lara Parada. Father Lain was expelled from Colombia in 1969, but returned surreptitiously in 1970 to join the guerrilla ranks.

The guerrilla movement has been on the wane in Colombia since the death of Camilo Torres, and is not considered particularly significant at the moment.

The President's Press

The media hang tough on Dick Nixon.

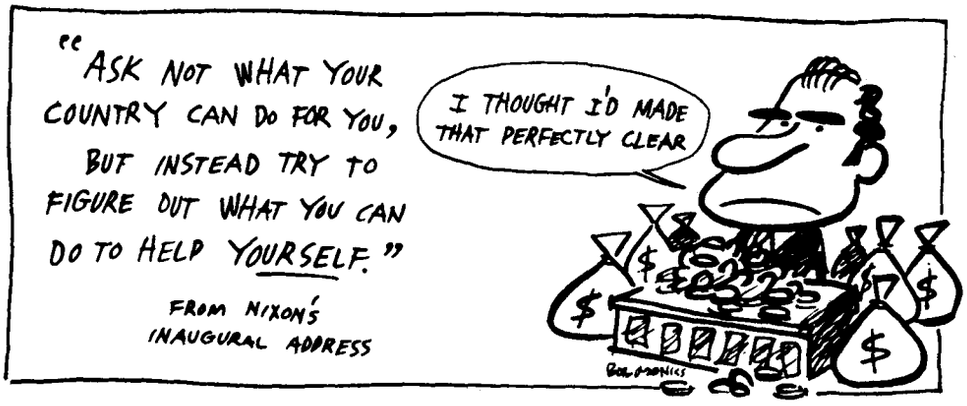
Columnist John Roche on his finances: "The insight into the President's character that really disturbed me was that in 1967 he borrowed $20,000 from Tricia at 6 per cent interest. The White House has admitted that the interest was never paid! Now how tight-fisted can you get? Even with kids there are limits."

The *Washington Post* on his flight to California via commercial airliner: "This was, in short, one of those empty gestures—another triumph of form over substance—with which we have become all too familiar. When you add to this the genuine risks involved, it becomes in addition one more measure of how desperate the President must perceive his own political condition to be."

Odds and Ends

—Presidential assistant John McLaughlin, whose 28 years as a Jesuit professedly establish him as an authority on "irregularities, disorders and scandals," has spoken out on Watergate. Compared to some ecclesiastical skeletons, said McLaughlin, Watergate is like the "peccadilloes of novice nuns."

—Another ethnic bites the dust. Sanche de Gramont (*The French, The Age of Magnificence, The Way Up*) has changed his name to Ted Morgan. JOHN DEEDY


"ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU, BUT INSTEAD TRY TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOURSELF."
FROM NIXON'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS
I THOUGHT I'D MADE THAT PERFECTLY CLEAR

Monks, Ontario, Canada

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CORRESPONDENCE

Poetry And/Of

Boston, Mass.

To the Editors: Although I found much interest in Michael True's article on "Poetry and Survival" [Dec. 21], I question not so much its major premise as the misplacement of its point of emphasis—or at least what I take to be this misplacement of emphasis. It is the old critical error of demanding that an entity in art fails, if it fails to meet the requirements of an a priori critical theory at hand. Therefore, according to True's laws of the poetics for salvation, T. S. Eliot's "Wasteland" fails because it went into the rose garden instead of into the research lab.

On the other hand, True claims, what's salvific about Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" is that it really grabs you by the short hairs. The power of "Howl" is not in question, but what Michael True sets in motion again is that awful game of categories, dividing this against that, thus attempting to destroy the poetic validity of this creative entity against that one, etc. It's a bad game that we have been playing much too long in so-called lit'ry criticism.

I think what Michael True doesn't take into account is that poetry is infinitely various and not to be equated in its parts. Much mischief in his method could be eliminated by replacing the connective in his essay's title with the preposition 'of'—in short, the poetry *of* survival. A slight alteration, maybe, but an immense change of concept. It's something like seeing how different it is to say the poetry of politics instead of the politics of poetry, but Michael True is doing just that—playing the politics of poetry game, which is what you do when you set up one poet or group of poets against another.

Incidentally, my own preference for the greatest survivalist in contemporary poetry is also the most neglected, much to the incredible shame of American criticism, and that is H.D. To say this, however, is not to set H.D. up against

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NON-GOVERNMENT & RESIGNATION

There is something to be said, although it be whimsically, for the persistent withdrawals of Richard Nixon to one or another of his hiding places, there to chum with Bebe Rebozo, confer with Ron Ziegler, and shuffle the teams of lawyers protecting his personal interests against the claims of justice, the Constitution and the public welfare. In a sense, the further Mr. Nixon is from sight and the affairs of state, the less irritant he is, and, presumably, the less mischief he can cause. Or so it may seem.

On the other hand, someone has to be in charge of government, and it is not at all clear that anyone is firmly in charge at the moment. Certainly Richard Nixon does not appear to be. Henry Kissinger is almost single-handedly conducting foreign policy—thankfully with considerable competence. Domestically, however, government may be devolving to a kind of *laissez-faire* rule by agency. The stock market slides, so the Federal Reserve Board reduces margin buying from 65 to 50 percent; the energy pinch tightens, so the Federal Energy Office parades the Commissioner of Baseball before microphones to announce a cutback in nighttime pre-game warm-ups (but no cutback in night games or in travel). The impression garnered from this patchwork approach to problems is of an Administration adrift, without effective leadership and with second-level officials grappling as best they can in the face of what can only be described as a top-level crisis.

The question is, how long can the country continue to get by on agency gimmicks and with a Presidency so preoccupied with self-defense as to be pretty much reduced to mere gestures and to blessing the comings and goings of Mr. Kissinger? The challenges do not demand an omnipowerful Presidency, a problem all its own, as we know from recent experience. But they do demand leadership and decision. Instead the country has virtually a historical parallel to the last months of the Buchanan Administration, when it was reduced to a situation of government by non-government. Nor would conditions be likely to improve if Mr. Nixon made his own troubles secondary to those of the country. Respect and confidence in Richard Nixon have eroded to a point where effective leadership is totally beyond his

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regrasping.

It is easier to analyze the nation's leadership problems than it is to come to grips with them. The obvious solution, of course, is impeachment. But to rush into an impeachment vote could be to play into the hands of Republican strategists, who would hurry this vote on the good hunch that not enough impeachment votes presently exist in the Congress to remove Mr. Nixon. The only strategy more self-serving may be that of narrowly partisan Democrats, who allegedly would drag out the impeachment process so as to have it as a live issue during next fall's Congressional campaign and into the Presidential campaign of 1976. Apart from the political cynicism of such a move, the country by then could be hopelessly mired in inflation, unemployment, shortages and other fallout from Richard Nixon's inability to govern.

The alternative to moving too fast and moving too slow best resides, it would seem, in the special investigating staff assembled by the House Judiciary Committee, and headed by John M. Doar, a Republican former Assistant Attorney General in two Democratic Administrations. The Judiciary Committee has been accused of moving too gingerly on the impeachment issue, but Doar's appointment could correct the vacillating that may exist. More importantly, his strong reputation and non-partisan image should make inescapable the conclusions forthcoming, perhaps by spring, from him and his staff.

On the basis of facts already known—and reportedly what is known is "only the tip of the iceberg"—a formal impeachment vote appears inevitable. Still, it could be regrettable if it came to that. The bruises to the country would be enormous, and even if Nixon "won" an impeachment vote, he would lose—and the country along with him. He cannot govern now, and he could no more govern after an impeachment vote than could Andrew Johnson. Richard Nixon would be best serving the country he professedly loves if he resigned as President of the United States.

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POLITICAL LIFE IN ULSTER

BIG STEP IN IRELAND

After weeks of speculation as to whether the politicians could come to agreement on the formation of an inter-party and inter-denominational Assembly, the trend towards the restoration of conventional political life suddenly speeded up in Northern Ireland.

The progress chart reads like this: Tuesday, November 20, by a slender majority the Ulster Unionist Council agreed to support Mr. Brian Faulkner, the Unionist Party leader, "in his efforts to create a strong regional executive or government."

Wednesday, November 21, the Unionist, the primarily Catholic S.D.L.P. and the non-sectarian Alliance party reached agreement with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the future form and composition of an Assembly Executive: an historic agreement on power sharing between Protestants and Catholics.

Thursday, November 22, Mr. Faulkner is appointed chief executive-designate of the Assembly, with Mr. Gerry Fitt, leader of the S.D.L.P. as deputy and Mr. Oliver Napier, Alliance leader, in charge of the Law Reform Office.

Sunday, December 2, British Premier Edward Heath appoints Mr. Francis Pym, Government Chief Whip, as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in succession to Mr. William Whitelaw, who is transferred to take up battle in Britain's economic 'civil war' as Secretary of State for Employment.

Thursday, December 6, tripartite talks between the British, Irish Governments and Northern Ireland executive-designate begin at Sunningdale, Berkshire, England.

Sunday, December 9, after four days of talks the tripartite conference ends with agreement on the formation of a Council of Ireland, a cross-border institution with a ministerial level consisting of seven members each from the North and the Republic, a secretariat, and a consultative assembly. The Government of the Irish Republic accepts the independent status of Northern Ireland until a majority of Northern people desire otherwise; the British Government says that if in the future a majority of the people of Northern Ireland wants to join a United Ireland, the British will give their support to this aspiration.

This remarkable progress culminating in the settlement's acceptance by the British and Irish Parliaments and approval from Cardinal Conway and Protestant church opinion, however, has not been achieved without a corresponding series of weaknesses in the body politic. This rejection process was as follows:

Monday, December 3, ten Unionist members who had remained unpledged to the executive-designate form an "Ulster Unionist Assembly Party" under the leadership of Mr. Harry West.

Wednesday, December 5, police are called to Northern Assembly after Democratic and Vanguard Unionists physically attack the pledged Unionists.

Thursday, December 6, at a meeting in the Ulster Hall,

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Belfast, over 600 delegates from the Unionist Party constituency associations and the Orange Order vote to form a new United Ulster Unionist Council on an anti-power sharing program.

Monday, December 11, the Sunningdale Settlement is loudly condemned by loyalist groups, by the Provisional IRA and by Sinn Fein. Cries of "Munich" and "Sell-out."

In short, within less than a month, Wolfe Tone's hallowed slogan of government by Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter rather than by sectarianism has been agreed upon. Furthermore, the politicians had hurdled traditional Anglo-Irish stumbling-blocks. For the Council of Ireland represents the principle of power-sharing on an All-Ireland basis.

Much of the credit for this advance is due to an English politician. Although Mr. Whitelaw was not present at Sunningdale, his hard work over a period of nearly two years laid the foundations of the settlement. He leaves Ireland with a successful record and with a reputation that makes him the only English politician ever, so far, to have enhanced rather than detracted from his standing through his performance in Ireland.

In the personality lists, mention too must also be made of the often derided Brian Faulkner ('the fox'). Less than two years after his removal from Prime Ministerial office in Northern Ireland by the British government, he has returned to leadership prominence. Much of this is due to his exceptional political skill of survival, but it is also due to his realization of the need for power-sharing with the Catholic minority. It is largely as a result of Faulkner's political persistence that the "them and us" attitude has changed to "We the executive." It is this kind of mood that is needed if the Sunningdale Agreement, which is scheduled to be ratified and lodged with the United Nations in the early New Year, is to be implemented. The future of the executive and of Sunningdale depends largely on the ability of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter to work together despite harassment from the wrecker and the bomber.

JOHN COONEY

(John Cooney, on the staff of the Irish Times, *is* Commonweal*'s regular correspondent in Ireland.)*

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THE FRENCH DEBATE

NUCLEAR PRO AND CON

A group of Christian officers recently published a long article in the *National Defense Magazine,* organ of the French army, in which they attempt to answer some of the criticisms that have recently been leveled at the army by pacifists, and especially Catholic laymen, priests and even bishops.

Last April, before the recent series of nuclear tests, the French bishops and the Protestant Federation published an important statement on the sale of arms, in which they condemned "the diabolical process in which France is imprisoned," and also "France's high-handed refusal to consider the concern and irritation of the Pacific nations over the nuclear tests." Two months later, the bishops' Justice and Peace Commission and the Protestant Federation published another joint declaration, on the current series of tests this time, stating among other things that "Many Christians feel that France's unilateral renunciation of its strategic nuclear armament policy would be an important gesture and a dynamic expression of the gospel."

During the tests many voices were raised in protest. A "Peace Battalion" (comprising 4 politicians, 1 general, 2 pacifists and 3 churchmen) went to Tahiti to demonstrate on the spot, while in France politicians and pacifists condemned France's nuclear policy. A verbal clash between Church and State was sparked off by the communiqué published on July 1st by the Bishop of Orleans, Guy Riobé, which stated: "At a time when many nations are discouraged or in revolt against a further development of nuclear weapons, I am in conscience bound, as a man, a Christian and a bishop, to say: No to nuclear weapons! No political or economic interest of any nation whatsoever can justify the use of the atom bomb. France would indeed show her greatness if she declared to the whole world: I have the power to carry out nuclear tests and to possess the atom bomb, but I renounce it in the interests of peace."

This unusually vigorous stand (for a bishop) provoked the ire of Admiral de Joybert, commander of the French Navy, who criticized what he considered to be clerical interference, on television, without mincing his words: "Halte-là, messieurs de la prêtrise! Voulez-vous, s'il vous plaît, vous mêlez de vous oignons." ("That's enough, gentlemen of the cloth! Would you be so kind as to mind your own business.")

Written at the request of Bishop Vanel, who is in charge of military chaplains, the article, entitled "Reflections on Defense," is neither an official declaration nor a doctrinal statement. It claims to be "a simple contribution to the dialogue." The authors of the article express their "fidelity to the Church and its hierarchy," but say that they are "pained by the hostility shown by a large section of the Christian community towards the army, and by the ignorance of all the complex factors

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involved often shown by the most outspoken critics."

The document begins by stressing that the aim of defense is the safeguarding of the "common good" even though, the authors admit, people are usually divided over what constitutes this good. In any case, military defense is only one aspect of overall national defense, and there are three degrees or ways of countering a possible menace: persuasion, dissuasion and action.

Moving on to the question of "personal attitudes," the Christian officers ask: "Do the values that we wish to defend justify the price that must be paid in suffering and loss of life?" To which they answer by further questions, such as: "Would the allies' attitude to Hitler in 1938 have been more effective if it had been firmer and less cowardly? Did the Hiroshima bomb cause greater suffering and more deaths than it avoided by forcing Japan to surrender?, etc."

A line must be drawn somewhere, however. "Efficacity should not be sought at any price, and the limit is clear for a Christian: when the values enshrined in the gospel are threatened by the means employed, then they must be opposed. It is finally up to each individual to decide, in conscience, not only the limits beyond which our methods of action cease to be a 'lesser evil' and become unacceptable, but also the collective attitude to adopt concerning every aspect of defense."

The officers are not opposed to conscientious objection. In fact, they state explicitly: "Both a defense based on the 'lesser evil' theory and non-violence are equally and simultaneously necessary: non-violence as a prophetic attitude, announcing the arrival of God's kingdom on earth; but also the former attitude, namely that adopted by men of action, willing to dirty their hands in order to defend the conditions whereby present-day society can evolve freely towards the advent of the same kingdom."

With regard to nuclear weapons, the document recalls that they are responsible for the famous "balance of terror," which has ensured world peace since 1950. For this reason, nuclear armaments should not be considered as "an unacceptable evil." Terror as a means of ensuring peace, however, cannot be considered by Christians as a "good"; but dissuasion based on nuclear weapons appears to be a lesser evil.

"This lesser evil," adds the text, "can be legitimately refused by a Christian as long as he is fully aware of the risks implied by his choice. It can also be accepted by a Christian, but not as a final solution. The Christian's duty to contribute to the evolution of the world, so that a true peace will eventually be founded on love and not on fear."

The article ends with a clear condemnation of the use of torture, in which case the ends never justify the means. It also mentions the sale of arms, making the following distinctions: "The sale of arms between developed countries is a form of industrial cooperation between states which are often allied in defending common values. It cannot be condemned, therefore. The sale of arms to developing countries is a much more delicate matter. Where a defense treaty exists between an industrial country selling arms and a developing country receiving them, a balance must be maintained between undue interference in the internal policy of the receiving country and lack of assistance to an ally in danger. Finally, the indiscriminate sale of arms to the Third World is the most debatable of all, and should only be resorted to when the great (arms manufacturing) powers have tried every peaceful means of limiting the arms race in a particular region of the world."

The Christian officers' article is an interesting contribution to the debate on the vexed question of military defense, nuclear weapons and the armament industry. It shows the complexity of the problem, giving food for thought to those idealists who—choosing to ignore the unpalatable fact of human sinfulness—would simply condemn all forms of violence as incompatible with the gospel, forgetting that the first duty of men, and States, is to defend those entrusted to their care. And yet, not only does the article have nothing new to say, but it draws so many fine distinctions, depending finally on personal interpretation, that it can be used to justify the existing policies of the great powers, i.e., to profit financially from the belligerence of the Third World countries and, even more cynically, to further their own ends by using these countries as pawns—of which the fourth Israeli-Arab war is an eloquent example. To many here it seems that there are times when a prophetic voice crying "War never again!" or "No to nuclear weapons!" is more in keeping with the gospel's intransigence (Let your yes be yes and your no be no) than the carefully reasoned and sophisticated casuistry of churchmen.

ALAIN WOODROW

(Alain Woodrow is Commonweal*'s regular correspondent in France.)*

NEXT WEEK

GEORGE W. SHEA writes about higher education, its woes and proposed cures:

"The changes in higher education and the problems bred of those changes in the last few decades have been enormous. There is now nearly universal agreement that we are in the middle of a new educational revolution, which may surpass in importance the industrial and political revolutions that preceded it. The revolution, in America especially, has been based upon the opening up of higher education to larger and larger numbers of people; and has finally reached the point where it embraces the concept of universal access to post-secondary schooling."

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LANCE, SPIRO AND THE VIGILANTES

PETER STEINFELS

QUESTION: What do Lance Rentzel and Spiro Agnew have in common?

Answer: Both have been, or are about to be, suspended from their occupations by their professional associations.

I am not enough of a pro football fan to know whether Lance Rentzel's name is exactly a household word. Apparently a sizable number of Americans are familiar with the sorry history of this 30-year-old athlete. Twice convicted, some years ago, for the unpleasant business of exposing himself to young girls, Rentzel received enough compassion and support from fans and fellow-players (and, perhaps more critically, from judges and psychiatrists) to go on playing—at least until he was arrested and convicted again last year, not for his former problem, but for possessing marijuana and codeine. This time, Pete Rozelle, Commissioner of the National Football League, banned Rentzel from further competition, for "conduct detrimental to football."

The case of Rentzel was examined recently by Nicholas von Hoffman in the *Washington Post*. Rentzel's suspension, says von Hoffman, is a far more severe penalty than anything the courts have chosen to hand down on the football player. It effectively curtails his ability to earn a living, which for a professional athlete almost always depends on making the most of a few short years of top physical vigor. Von Hoffman doubts whether Rentzel's presence on the football field would threaten the moral standards of the pro fans, besides which, we ought finally to learn not to make moral heroes of athletes, movie stars, and other unlikely raw material.

According to von Hoffman, then, "the Rentzel case . . . demonstrates the arbitrary and unjust nature of non-judicial social and economic punishment."

The parallel with Agnew's situation did not escape von Hoffman either, and he is too consistent a commentator to take the frequent liberal tack of disallowing for a political conservative what is tolerated in a sexual deviant. "The court has done with [Agnew], but now his fellow lawyers want to disbar him, as though some social good will be realized by conspiring to see that the man must beg for his food in the streets."

Von Hoffman knows that in the Rentzel case, in itself slightly tawdry, slightly bathetic, he has got hold of a wider issue. But the issue may be even wider than he thinks. It raises the question of how a society like ours goes about maintaining its values, and specifically whether it can do so by legal sanctions alone. Can all the standards of behavior that hold a group together, whether a nation, a neighborhood, or a professional body, be defined and enforced by law? If not, what is the alternative?

The liberal tradition is of two minds about this. It distrusts established and "private" authorities, who can escape public review and democratic regulation. But it also wants to limit the scope of the law, to keep the state, as far as possible, out of enforcing standards of behavior. To return to the Rentzel case, this means we are suspicious of the power of a football league to sanction anything as vague as "conduct detrimental to football"; and at the same time we know that the legal system—"a blunt instrument," as the phrase goes—is no tool for poking into questions of such "conduct."

The way out is to throw "conduct detrimental etc." entirely overboard as an unworkable and mischievous notion. As long as a player catches passes, throws blocks, shows up for practice, his other conduct is irrelevant. He can be a crook, an exhibitionist, a vocal racist, a traitor, or a war criminal. That is strictly his own—or the courts'—business. The same for lawyers. If they can competently provide whatever it is their clients need, then a little bribery and tax evasion, especially if well publicized so that the *emptor* may easily *caveat*, are no grounds for disbarment. And so on, right through society.

The only trouble is that a society like that is a lousy one. It reduces the ties among men to techniques, or to the strictly minimal decencies that the law can be trusted with. Or it may even be self-defeating: out of necessity one starts enlarging the law, setting up bureaucratic instruments to deal "statutorily" with good behavior.

Maybe von Hoffman has confused the issue by assuming that non-judicial sanctions must be "arbitrary and unjust." After all, there are principles of restraint and justice which apply outside the law. Perhaps the problem is complicated by the fact that so many "private" bodies are organized in such an undemocratic manner. Would it be different if the NFL *players* decided Rentzel's future connection with their sport, rather than the one, unappealable vote of a Commissioner? (The Players' Association is paying the costs of a suit challenging Rozelle's decision.)

I don't know. I don't like people suffering economic and social penalties because they dress or think differently. I don't like "vigilante action." The law must operate at some point to protect against such pressures. But it can't substitute for all the forces which go into forming and maintaining a public morality. The Left has criticized bureaucratization and advocated the revitalization of "community" as a repository of values—on the job, in the neighborhood. And you can't expect "community" to be meaningful as long as you withhold from it all real power. You can't have it both ways.

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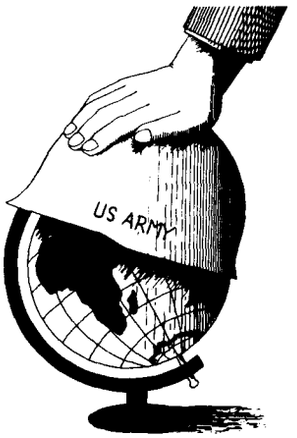
CAN THE ARMY SURVIVE VOLAR?

MICHAEL T. KLARE



People problems in an all-volunteer force

"By every conceivable indicator," Col. Robert D. Heinl reported in 1970, "our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and noncommissioned officers, drug-ridden and dispirited where not near-mutinous." These conditions were not limited to Vietnam, he wrote in *Armed Forces Journal,* but could be found at every U.S. military post around the world. Heinl, a correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance and a former Marine officer, observed that "The morale, discipline and battle-worthiness of the U.S. Armed Forces are, with a few salient exceptions, lower and worse than at any time in this century and possibly in the history of the United States."

Heinl's findings, while more sensationalized than most, were generally confirmed by other observers of the U.S. Military Establishment. Even General William C. Westmoreland, the former U.S. commander in Vietnam, acknowledged in October 1970 that "Today, the Army is entering one of the most critical periods in its history." By all accounts, the breakdown in morale was most advanced in the ground forces—the Army and Marine Corps—which bore the brunt of the fighting in Vietnam. The Army suffered twice as many casualties as all the other services combined in what proved to be one of the longest and costliest wars in U.S. history and also had the highest rates of desertion, drug abuse and disciplinary problems. All of the services, however, ultimately suffered from the strife and disunity generated by the war; even as late as June 1973 there were still reports of U.S. airmen refusing combat assignments in Indochina.

Not all of the Pentagon's troubles can be traced to Vietnam, however. The 1960s were years of great social upheaval in the United States, and inevitably the problems and conflicts of civilian society were mirrored in service life. Racism, black nationalism, student radicalism, drug abuse and "youth culture" were not caused by Vietnam—but all the tensions they produced were heightened and intensified by the authoritarian nature of military society. Many draftees, furthermore, were exposed to radical politics before induction and naturally brought their new attitudes with them into the Armed Forces. "The generation gap is a fact of life in our society," General Westmoreland wrote in 1972. "We inherited it in the Army, just as we inherited all problems in our society." What made this problem particularly troublesome, however, was the high number of college students among the enlisted ranks: "They want to know all the answers. They want to know why, and they want to talk philosophy of war and philosophy in general, and the non-coms haven't been able to communicate with them at that intellectual level." As privates began questioning the legitimacy and morality of military commands, discipline crumbled and the Army faced an unprecedented internal crisis. The explosive nature of this crisis is indicated by the following data:

Desertion: Army desertions in 1971 occurred at the rate of 73 men per thousand, which was twice the rate during the Korean War and higher than the World War II peak rate of 63 men per thousand. Altogether, 68,500 men deserted in the first ten months of Fiscal Year (FY) 1971 alone—the equivalent of four infan-

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try divisions. Marine desertions, at 59.6 per thousand, were nearly as acute, and Navy and Air Force desertions reached record levels.

Mutinies and revolts: Vietnam witnessed an event rarely experienced before in American history: the refusal of an entire military unit to engage the enemy while on the battlefield. As early as 1969, a company of the 197th Light Infantry Brigade publicly sat down on the battlefield and refused to fight. Later that year, a rifle company of the famed 1st Air Cavalry Division refused combat before the cameras of CBS News. The most serious case of "combat avoidance" (as these incidents have been termed) occurred in 1971 when Troop B of the 1st Air Cavalry refused to re-enter enemy territory in order to recover their commander's jeep with its communication gear, codes and secret operations orders. While these incidents received substantial publicity, much less is known (for obvious reasons) of the many instances of "working it out"—the practice whereby a group of G.I.'s refused hazardous duty, but later agreed to perform less risky tasks after negotiating with their officers.

Fraggings: Officers and sergeants who refused to "work it out" with G.I.'s in Vietnam often ran the risk of being "fragged" by a live grenade thrown by one of their own men. Acknowledged fragging incidents rose from 126 in 1969 to 271 in 1970 and some 425 in 1971. At least 78 officers and non-coms were killed in this fashion, and another 600 wounded.

Insubordination, G.I. resistance: While desertions, fraggings and mutinies constituted the most dramatic attacks on military authority, they represented but the tip of the iceberg of G.I. rebellion: in thousands and thousands of unreported incidents, individual soldiers defied the military hierarchy by refusing to salute their officers, by wearing peace symbols and other forbidden accoutrements, by disputing the legitimacy of certain orders and regulations, and by other acts of defiance. Such individual acts of insorbordination were given collective voice in the 245 underground G.I. newspapers published on or near Army bases, and in the dozens of antiwar G.I. organizations that formed during the height of the Indochina conflict.

Drug abuse: By 1971, the use of narcotics by G.I.'s in Vietnam had reached "epidemic proportions," with an estimated 30 percent of all low-ranking combat troops using heroin or other hard drugs regularly. Although hard drug use was most pervasive in Vietnam, it was not insignificant elsewhere: at some bases in West Germany, 25 percent of the enlisted men were using heroin or other narcotics. The Navy also suffered from heavy drug use —over 5,000 sailors were discharged for drug abuse in 1970, an enormous jump from the 170 discharges in 1966.

Racial conflict: Racism and discrimination have always been basic characteristics of service life, but not until the late 1960s were these practices challenged from within on a massive scale by black G.I.'s. As black consciousness penetrated the services, race conflict became a regular feature of military life, and clashes between black G.I.'s and white officers became a daily occurrence.

Deeper Problem

These problems and conflicts, while extremely corrosive in themselves, were not the root causes of the Pentagon's difficulties but rather symptoms of a deeper malaise engendered by the American failure in Vietnam. In order to understand the nature of this malaise, it is necessary to review the origins of the U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia. Prior to the Kennedy Administration, American defense policy was dominated by the strategy of Massive Retaliation which held that the very threat of thermonuclear attack was sufficient to deter any military challenge to the U.S. national interests. Massive Retaliation failed, however, to deter revolutionary outbursts in Cuba, Algeria and Indochina, and in 1961 Kennedy's advisers introduced the strategy of Flexible Response to provide an enhanced "conventional" (i.e., non-nuclear) option in meeting threats at the lower end of the military spectrum.

On the basis of this doctrine, Kennedy authorized a substantial expansion of U.S. ground forces and the development of a substantial counterinsurgency capability. When the Diem regime came under sustained attack from indigenous revolutionaries, the Kennedy Administration—acting upon the premises of Flexible Response—ordered the deployment of Special Forces commandos and U.S. Army "advisers" to Vietnam. When these forces failed to stem the growing revolt, Kennedy sent still more "advisers" to protect the "credibility" of our counter-insurgency capability. Ultimately 500,000 U.S. combat troops were deployed in Vietnam in a long and futile attempt to defeat the Vietnamese revolution.

As long as the U.S. involvement in Vietnam was limited to advisers and Green Berets, American public opinion was largely neutral on the issue of the war. But once large numbers of combat troops were committed to a costly and unproductive ground war, public opinion became negative and finally hostile. Ultimately, it became obvious to soldier and citizen alike that the American strategy in Vietnam—with its emphasis on the massive use of ground forces—was incapable of producing a rapid and economical victory. The strategy of Flexible Response, moreover, proved to be quite *inflexible* when put to the test—for once U.S. ground troops had been introduced in Vietnam, it proved to be extremely difficult to *withdraw* them without damaging the credibility of America's counterrevolutionary mission.

This lesson is not likely to be forgotten quickly: as the nation enters the post-Vietnam era, it is clear that

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the American people will not tolerate another manpower-intensive ground war of the Vietnam type. In response to this growing national consensus, the Nixon Administration introduced the "low profile" Nixon Doctrine with its call for the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from Asia, and their replacement with the troops of client regimes (liberally supported, of course by U.S. air and sea power). The new strategy, according to Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., "will call first for the high-technology, capital-intensive services—air and naval forces—to support the indigenous armies of threatened allies."

Under the new Pentagon doctrine, U.S. ground forces will be reduced substantially (armed forces have already been cut in half, and the Marines by one-third), and manpower-intensive war plans replaced by strategies calling for the use of capital-intensive, machine-oriented, highly mobile combat units. "We seek a leaner, more versatile Army," General Westmoreland explained in 1971, "equipped with the most modern and effective weapons and manned by motivated, well-trained soldiers." In order to survive on the battlefields of the future, the smaller Army of the 1970s will necessarily have to acquire a much higher ratio of firepower to manpower. This objective was eloquently summarized by General Ellis W. Williamson in 1971 as follows: "We are making unusual efforts to avoid having the American young men stand toe-to-toe, eyeball-to-eyeball or even rifle-to-rifle against an enemy that might outnumber him on the battlefield. We are trying to fight the enemy with our bullets instead of the bodies of our young men—'firepower, not manpower.'"

All-Volunteer Force

Yet of all the steps taken to overcome the problems generated by the stalemate in Vietnam, none is as bold or far-reaching as the abolition of the draft and introduction of an all-volunteer force. After a six-month trial period of zero draft calls, the Pentagon's authority to conscript men into the Armed Forces expired on June 30, 1973. For the first time in three decades, the Defense Department was totally dependent on voluntary enlistments to meet its basic manpower requirements.

Abolition of the draft was an early campaign pledge of Richard Nixon, and soon after his election in 1968 he started laying plans for its demise. In March 1969, two months after his inauguration, Nixon appointed former Secretary of Defense Thomas S. Gates to chair a high-level Commission on an All-Volunteer Force. After a year of intensive study, the Gates Commission determined that the Armed Forces could be placed on an all-volunteer basis without prejudicing the national security. In its report to the President, the Commission argued that with higher pay and other benefits, military service could be made competitive with civilian employment, and that it would be possible therefore to recruit sufficient manpower for an active armed force of 2.3 million men. In response to complaints that an all-volunteer force would be composed entirely of blacks and poor whites, the Commission noted optimistically that "Our research indicates that the composition of the armed forces would not be fundamentally changed by ending conscription."

On the strength of the Gates Commission report, President Nixon secured from Congress the required authorization and funding to begin work on the formation of a volunteer army (VOLAR). The first step, of course, was to make military life more attractive to potential recruits. On November 14, 1971 a new military bill went into effect raising a recruit's base pay from $149 per month to $321; comparable increases were authorized for other ranks, and, as a result, military pay became truly competitive with civilian employment for the first time in American history.

In order to attract volunteers for the infantry and other combatant forces (as distinct from the technological specialties chosen by most volunteers under a "unit-of-choice" option), the Pentagon offered bonuses of up to $2,500 for four-year enlistments in the "combat arms." These bonuses and pay increases cost the nation $4.6 billion in 1972-73 alone. Substantial funds have also been allocated to refurbish barracks and provide other amenities designed to "improve the quality of service life." In Fiscal 1974, for instance, the Army will spend $682 million to enhance barracks conditions, $615 million for improved G.I. medical services, $592 million for support of dependents, and $62 million to eliminate odious kitchen duties. The goal of these "people programs," according to Army Secretary Froehlke, is to improve soldier living conditions so that they "'equate more closely with the average environment of middle-class society"— an obvious lure to the blacks and poor whites who constitute the majority of potential recruits.

Pentagon efforts to improve the attractiveness of military service are not limited to financial and environmental incentives: a considerable effort is being made to eliminate "Mickey Mouse" chores—the petty harassments and pointless rules so characteristic of G.I. life. Among the innovations introduced by VOLAR managers in the past few years are: beer dispensers and semi-private cubicles in barracks; fewer mandatory inspections and KP duties; and liberal leave policies. For most privates in the peacetime army, service will be confined to the 40-hour, five-day week common to civilian life.

The net effect of all VOLAR programs, it seems, is to compose what can accurately be termed a "contract" with enlistees which goes something like this: "we'll offer you job security, travel and adventure, and a middle-class standard of life—in return for your promise to carry out orders and, if necessary, to fight at the direction of your officers." The existence of such an arrangement is im-

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plicit in Army posture statements; thus General Michael S. Davison of the Army has written: "It seems clear that organizational measures which enhance a soldier's basic welfare and sense of security will also improve his willingness to carry out his role in the unit. As his commitment to the unit grows, so will his self-discipline which is our objective."

Some critics of VOLAR charge that, in essence, this contract represents the foundation of a mercenary army composed largely of blacks and poor whites. Thus Joseph A. Califano, a Washington lawyer and former aide to President Johnson, has labeled the volunteer army a "human weapons system" that will let "the lower class fight our wars." Califano argues that since VOLAR will only attract high school dropouts and those without marketable skills, the volunteer system represents a revival of "the Civil War practice of having the better off hire the worse off to serve their time in the military." By effectively exempting middle-class youths from military service, he added, "we write into law the concept of one man's money for another man's blood." Charges that VOLAR is building a "mercenary army" have been voiced even more emphatically in the black community, where a large proportion of VOLAR's enlistment quota is expected to be filled. Charles B. Rangel, a black Congressman from New York City, predicted in 1971 that blacks, Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans will constitute the bulk of the volunteers—"since there are no other economic options open to them." It would be a lie, he said, "to label this a volunteer army. It would be a mercenary army composed of men soldiering for a pay check."

Not surprisingly, the Pentagon insists that the volunteer army will not become filled with a disproportionate number of blacks and other minorities. Thus in a 1972 progress report on VOLAR programs, Defense Secretary Laird told Congress that "the alleged pitfalls of the voluntary military organization—that it will be dominated by mercenaries, who will take over the nation, or be all black—are false and unfounded claims." To support this finding, Laird produced figures to show that blacks constitute a mere 11 percent of the active military population, or 2.5 percent less than their percentage of the total military-age population.

These figures are deceiving, however: blacks are highly concentrated in the Army (15 percent of all personnel), and in the lower ranks generally. Furthermore, as the remaining draftees leave the service and volunteers take their place, the proportion of blacks will increase significantly. Thus in January 1971, when the Army was still drafting large numbers of men for Vietnam, blacks constituted only 13.5 percent of the enlisted ranks; by June 1972, the black proportion was 15.1 percent, while three months later it reached 18 percent. And in 1973, under the zero-draft system, blacks have constituted about one-fourth of all Army enlistments. Pentagon data also testifies to the lower-class origins of most volunteers: 80 percent of Army recruits in March 1973 reported that their pre-enlistment civilian pay was *less* than the military base level of $321 per month; taking into account the free meals, lodging, and other benefits provided by the Army, these men actually secured a significant increase in their standard of living.

Many critics of the all-volunteer system predict that as the services become filled with blacks and poor whites,

public resistance to the use of such forces in "police operations" abroad will decrease. "By removing the middle class from even the threat of conscription," Joseph Califano charged in 1973, "we remove perhaps the greatest inhibition on a President's decision to wage war." Representative Rangel made similar predictions: under VOLAR, he wrote in the *New York Times,* "America's oppressed races would be fighting and dying so that affluent whites can continue to enjoy the fruits of imperialism." Although the disappearance of middle-class whites from military service will probably remove some restraints on the President's capacity to wage war abroad, it is doubtful that he will be given a completely free hand, as intimated by these VOLAR critics. For one thing, the increasingly high cost of voluntary personnel will force the Pentagon to be very hesitant about exposing soldiers to hostile fire. "The higher the value of American (human) resources," Lt. T. D. Kelly wrote in *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings,* "the more reluctant the nation will be to lose them in war and, thus, the option of going to war to solve political problems will become increasingly undesirable." Ultimately, middle-class resistance to conscription *will* place a limit on the Pentagon's capacity to initiate war under a zero-draft system: as long as the services are barred from reintroducing the draft to obtain replacements for men lost in battle, it cannot get involved in combat situations where the manpower requirement is likely to be high.

Ultimately, the success or failure of the Pentagon's efforts to create an all-volunteer force will hinge on the outcome of two basic questions: can VOLAR provide a sufficient pool of qualified personnel for an already diminished military apparatus?; and, can it provide highly motivated disciplined *fighters* in the event of a war?

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The answer to the first of these questions is just becoming known: data released by the Department of Defense in mid-1973 indicate that enlistments in the Armed Forces generally, and in the Army in particular, are falling short of minimum manpower requirements by a substantial margin. Since January 1973, when the Army enlistment objective of 17,900 men was oversubscribed due to the lingering volunteer-inducing effects of the draft, one-fifth to one-fourth of expected Army volunteers have failed to enlist. In February, enlistments were 15 percent short of the 11,500-man quota; in March the quota was 18 per cent short. And preliminary data for April, May and June show enlistment shortfalls of from 15 to 30 percent. If present trends continue, the Army is expected to be short 74,000 men by July 1974, or almost 10 percent of its planned strength of 791,000 men. The pressure on Army recruiters to increase their quotas of enlistees is reportedly so great that over 100 of them have been replaced or are under investigation for falsifying of records of recruits or providing aid on intelligence or aptitude tests in order to enroll men who could not otherwise meet minimum service standards.

Lower Standards

As one aspect of the recruitment problem, Pentagon officials are under increasing pressure to lower recruit standards and accept more high school dropouts and other "underqualified" men. A recent study conducted by the Brookings Institution of Washington, D.C. shows that to meet minimum recruitment quotas of 365,000 men per year, the Armed Forces must enlist one-third of all "available" males aged 19 to 23—an extremely high, and perhaps unattainable, proportion. (In the Brookings study, "available" is defined as men who are physically, mentally, and morally qualified for service—and who are not planning to enter college.) Some recruiters seek to enlarge the manpower pool by lowering mental qualifications (high school dropouts already account for half of all recruits), but other officers oppose such measures on the grounds that an increasingly technological force will require men who can operate relatively complex machines. Lowered educational standards would also increase the proportion of blacks, Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans in service (since these groups are normally accorded the poorest education in our society).

Advocates of VOLAR, on the other hand, charge that the services have set artificially high enlistment qualifications in order to "sabotage" the all-volunteer program. Thus Roger T. Kelley, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense who many consider to be the architect of VOLAR "are bolder and more frequent in their acts system "can demonstrate a need for the draft by letting failures occur." Kelley claimed that the adversaries of VOLAR "are bolder and more frequent in their acts of sabotage against the system." As of June 1973, many top Pentagon officials were predicting that unless enlistments take a strong turn upwards some form of conscription will have to be instituted within a year.

If these predictions prove accurate and the draft is reestablished, it may never be necessary to answer the second basic question concerning the viability of VOLAR: can an all-volunteer, "mercenary" army be made to fight if a war breaks out? Naturally, no one can predict the outcome of such an event in advance; it is nevertheless worthwhile to consider the impact of various VOLAR programs on the attitudes of volunteers.

Some critics of VOLAR have predicted that a highly-paid professional military organization would become a force of "hired killers" who would balk at nothing when ordered to attack a hostile population. There is little evidence, however, to support this view. Most G.I.'s in all-volunteer outfits indicate that they appreciate the higher pay and other benefits of VOLAR, but feel no increased commitment to a military "career" as a result. In fact, many soldiers report the opposite: under the 9 to 5, Monday to Friday system, G.I.'s are free to leave their base as soon as work is over, and most insist that they want things to remain that way.

"I like this post," reports Pfc Steven McClaran of the all-volunteer 197th Infantry Brigade, "There are no passes, no sign-in sign-out procedures, no KP. You can hop in your car and take off. It's just like a civilian job." Another volunteer, Spt. James Barrett, told *The Wall Street Journal* that "I didn't figure the Army would be easy. Hell, everyone's got to gripe about the work and the harassment. They get on me about my [longish] hair. But you can't beat it. I'm earning $348 a month sitting around and doing a little work."

These comments—and they are not uncommon—do not suggest a gung-ho, war-crazed crowd like the Foreign Legionnaires of *Battle of Algiers* (or even like John Wayne's celluloid *Green Berets*). In fact, many analysts believe that the higher the standard of living promised recruits, the less enthusiastic they'll be about risking their lives in combat. As one veteran sergeant put it, the volunteers come into the Army "expecting the life of Riley. . . . If we get into a war, we'll have to call the old soldiers back."

There is another question that must be asked of a mercenary army with a substantial non-white membership: given the growing militancy of the black and Chicano movements in the United States, will VOLAR's black and Spanish-speaking recruits obey their white officers when ordered to attack enemy forces—especially when those forces are also black or brown? Again, no one can answer this question in advance; but there are indications that the Army *will* have to address itself to this problem. Many black G.I.'s questioned in Europe have expressed considerable alienation from their regular military assignments, and most seemed more concerned

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with combating discrimination than preparing for war with the Communists. "Nixon and Agnew are strictly for white folks only," a black soldier told the *New York Times*. "Repression seems like the only thing they got for black folks—how am I going to fight for them?" Another black G.I., Sgt. Larry Tyler, recalled how his sister was in the dormitory at Jackson State College that was shot up by Mississippi state police in 1970, and asked: "How can you fight for America, when every morning you read about black people being killed?" And in Fulda, an Army base camp some 10 miles from the East German border, a black veteran of Vietnam mused: "America should deserve my life if I'm going to give it."

If present enlistment patterns continue, the Armed Forces will face a serious manpower crisis within a year. The Army, with an anticipated manpower shortage of 75,000 men, will be hit hardest—but the other services will also face severe shortages and/or lowered enlistment standards. Barring a serious economic crisis or new defense emergency (either of which might induce a higher rate of enlistment), the Defense Department must consider remedial action now if the services are to be fully manned in the late 1970's. Among the options on the Pentagon's agenda in 1974 are:

1) *A return to conscription,* with some form of draft system to make up the shortfalls in voluntary enlistments.

2) *Further reductions in the size of the services,* with a corresponding increase in emphasis on capital-intensive weapons systems.

3) *Lowered enlistment standards,* with a higher proportion of black and Spanish-speaking volunteers.

A return to the draft would be the surest way of solving the manpower problem—but it is also the solution that will encounter the most resistance from Congress. Considering the present political mood of the country (and in the light of Watergate), it is probable that the Pentagon will elect the smoother course, choosing some combination of options 2 and 3. Indeed, Congress has already proposed further cuts in the Defense manpower authorization, while the Pentagon has announced plans to lower educational standards for Army enlistees. Neither of these solutions is attractive to the military, however, and it is certain that top Defense officials will begin a long-range campaign to foster public support for reinstatement of the draft.

Whatever solutions are found to overcome the manpower shortages, the Defense Department will still face the many unresolved "people problems" that threaten the effectiveness of existing combat units. These problems—racial conflict, drug abuse, rebelliousness, etc.—will persist as long as American society as a whole is torn by social chaos and conflict. Clearly, if the Armed Forces are to fulfill their mission in the post-Vietnam era, they must obtain loyal, dedicated and competent soldiers who can be counted on to follow orders under fire. As noted by General Abrams, ". . . the smaller Army that we are fielding today must be highly motivated, disciplined, fully manned, and fully equipped with modern weapons. An Army with these ingredients will be a professional force, unhampered by social turmoil, and composed of well-trained and ready soldiers prepared to meet any crisis." This is an ambitious goal under any circumstances—but the very survival of the Armed Forces now hinges on its achievement.

FISH STORY

THE SCREEN

There is a character in *The Day of the Dolphin* who has the temerity to suggest to Dr. Jake Terrell (George C. Scott) that he may be administering his experiments with dolphins a bit extravagantly. Ah well, we say to ourselves, this guy clearly does not represent the forces of Reason, Knowledge and Love. As it happens, our worst suspicions are confirmed, for the guy turns out to be not only a homosexual and a conspirator against the government, but an Italian!

Perhaps more dangerous still—and certainly more corrosive to the very foundations of our way of life—the guy also proves himself a completely ineffectual cost accountant. Pointing to the fortress of a fish tank Terrell has built on the Florida key where he does his research, the guy, an official of the foundation paying Terrell's bills, exclaims in frustration, "You've spent $200,000 on that, and I don't even know what it's for." At this Terrell melodramatically plays on fifteen tape decks in his lab fifteen different tape recordings demonstrating the progress he's made teaching a dolphin to speak English. The guy is so snowed, he never thinks to ask Terrell why he needed a separate tape deck for each tape.

Terrell doesn't need all those tape decks, of course. Mike Nichols does, to dramatize this water-logged novel by Robert Merle. Nonetheless, the effect of such a profusion of tape decks is, like the effect of so many things in this film, to make us wonder whether it's all really necessary—whether it really has a point that even dolphins, as intelligent as they are, would understand. It all raises the ultimate question, What time is this movie over?

Another question that somebody might have asked is, Why teach dolphins to talk English in the first place? (Admittedly this sort of question would never enter the head of anyone from a foundation.) At a lecture Terrell is giving when the film opens, a woman does ask him what he hopes to learn from dolphins. But he tells her instead what he hopes to teach to them, as if that

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were the same thing. Surely learning to speak dolphin language would be of far more interest and value to a real scientist than teaching dolphins to speak English. The very premise of this story seems frivolous, like something dreamed up by Marineland rather than a serious marine biologist. Because of their inescapable naturalism, movies have a way of betraying plots with a phony premise like this. Speaking in the moony nasal voice the filmmakers have given him, Alpha, the talking dolphin, busts up every dramatically intended scene in the film. How can you carry on a serious conversation with a fish who sounds like Selma Diamond?

Someone else at that lecture asks Terrell whether he's aware of research that the military has done with dolphins. Instead of misconstruing the question and giving another irrelevant answer, Terrell this time refuses to answer the question altogether. I suppose Nichols' purpose in having him cut the woman off is to show us how innocent of human affairs he is, as if refusing to think about such things would protect his pure research from being contaminated by the people who do think about them. But there is a question crucial to the plot that gets dismissed here as well. That is, why should conspirators who want to train a dolphin to carry magnetic mines need to kidnap a talking dolphin for the job? Early in the film we see some Marineland dolphins who seem perfectly adequate if all you need is a good-natured torpedo. I'm sure they could have been stolen more easily, or perhaps even rented for the occasion.

It's amazing that so much talent could collaborate with so little result on this picture. Costume designer Anthea Sylbert and editor Sam O'Steen, both the highest-priced, most sought-after practitioners of their specialties, have contributed nothing that couldn't have been achieved equally well by putting nobody in charge of costumes and editing. Even veteran director of photography William Franker manages to over-expose a scene or two, and accomplished comedy writer Buck Henry, trying for a real dramatic change of pace with this script, writes another comedy. I emphasize all these other people's contributions, or want thereof, only because Mike Nichols' anonymous style of directing usually relies heavily on such help. Perhaps this time he has botched things up so thoroughly himself that he pulls everyone else under as well. The film is in trouble from the very first shot, which shows George C. Scott facing us and delivering that lecture on dolphins. Nichols must have been leading as isolated a life as Terrell himself these last few years. Hasn't he seen *Patton?* He even lets George C. Scott get away with some of the same emphatic squinting he used in that patriotic pep talk with which *Patton* begins. It's ludicrous.

Besides the sense that the plot doesn't make, there's a certain sense that Terrell doesn't make as a character. The opening scenes establish that he is naive, tyrannical and self-centered. What's more, he's the kind of man who slights his wife for a dolphin (a male dolphin at that). But as the film progresses his hubris just fades away. Maybe the idea is that all things are relative. The one excuse we might have for finding him less obnoxious later on is that we then have someone worse in the conspirators.

Whatever the reason, Terrell suffers neither reform nor catastrophe. In fact at the end he is still at least as naive as he was at the beginning. As the conspirators return to kill him and his staff so there will be no witnesses, Terrell bitterly tells Alpha, "Return to the sea: swim, play, eat but *no* talk anymore"—as if speech were what had gotten Terrell in trouble rather than his own character. Identifying speech as the cause of all evil is about as silly as kidnapping dolphins, owning fifteen tape decks, and almost everything else that goes on in this film.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

'RELIGIOUS AMERICA'

MEDIA

The unwitting message of the new series on the Public Broadcasting Service entitled "Religious America" is that religion in America is generally as detached and vacant as many people feared it was. Each of these thirteen programs is described as an "intimate view of a spiritual experience in the lives of several Americans today." The 26-year-old producer-director, Philip Garvin, spent two years making the series, according to a press release, "criss-crossing the country—meeting people, experiencing their experiences . . . trying very hard to understand them and what it is that makes their lives so extraordinary." He does not seem to have discovered much in this process, and it is hard to say whether he just couldn't see it or whether there just aren't many spiritual experiences out there.

The series examines, or rather glances at, the churchly activities of a Pentecostal group in California, an ex-POW's family in Virginia, a Hasidic community in Brooklyn, a Black Baptist congregation in Indiana, a group of rural Lutherans in Minnesota and a Mexican Catholic family in Los Angeles, among others. Each half-hour focuses on a worship service, (and if nothing else, the steady viewer of this series will get an overview of the depressing state of church music from coast to coast and church to church). Interviews with several members of each congregation are then intercut with the singing and praying, as the individuals try to put their spiritual experience into words.

What we do *not* get is an attempt on the part of the filmmakers to "understand what it is that makes their

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lives so extraordinary" or indeed any evidence that their lives are interesting, much less extraordinary. The spiritual experiences mentioned here are by definition private moments when the individuals feel they are in personal contact with God. For many of them, New York Episcopalians as well as California Pentecostals, these experiences are in the nature of direct zaps from Heaven, physical blows to the head or emotional floods to the heart, and in most cases they occur on schedule every Sunday. How these experiences influence them later in the day or on the following Wednesday is not described or shown, and it frankly does not seem to have much to do with what these people—and the filmmakers—are looking for in religion. (There is one exception, which I will go into.)

Religion, as these people describe it, makes them feel good. "Jesus makes me smile," says a woman in California; "My life is in His hands," says a girl in a commune —and that is pretty much all we come to know about either of them. Many of those interviewed emphasize that the value of a spiritual experience is precisely that it "turns you away" from the world and mundane goings-on. A chicly dressed parishioner at St. James Episcopal Church in Manhattan is seen walking home from church as her voice, in a narration, explains that Jesus helps her rise above the ugliness and misery of the city. The ex-POW bomber pilot, who plans to reenlist, tells his hometown congregation how Jesus helped him withhold secrets from the North Vietnamese.

Certainly every single person here deserves as much comfort as he or she can locate, and certainly we just don't know, when a person is photographed closing his eyes, gazing heavenward, singing out or speaking in tongues, whether or not he is having a meaningful experience. But it would be helpful to see that, as a result of such a close contact with Jesus, these individuals were then dealing justly and lovingly with their neighbors—and not spending the week beating their wives, for example, or more specifically, bombing Indochinese peasants who are entitled to some comfort and security of their own. Without the context of lives led, the "intimate" spirituality here strikes us as at least barren, and at worst phony.

In many cases, I think Mr. Garvin was just bad. He has a great fondness for lyrical natural settings—surf, woods, and so on, and I suspect, for example, that he stumbled onto the small Minnesota farming community at Christmas time ("Crow River Christmas") and said, "Wow, you people really are spiritual, out here in all this snow, with all these animals." So the people tried to oblige him: they offer thoughts for the film such as, "Jesus is the spirit of Christmas," or, "We couldn't make it without God. God makes the sun shine." Their Christmas day is self-conscious and wooden, and aunts and uncles seem a little embarrassed as the family keeps stopping for prayer whenever things start to get lively. They speak often of "those not as fortunate as we are," and I swear the child in the family even says, in all solemnity, that he'd rather give presents than get them. There must have been some celebration when the cameraman left.

Two episodes stand out—one because it is so good it seems to have been made by an entirely different crew, and the other because it suggests a ghastly story behind the scenes which the filmmakers don't seem to have been aware of. "Lubavitch," the single non-Christian group represented among the eight episodes I have seen, swirls and pounds with the exotic intensity of this orthodox Jewish sect. Here indeed faith reaches roughly out into life and, for good or ill, shoves every moment of it into shape. The young people look almost dazed as they are knocked into a turmoil of study, prayer and ritual, morning, noon and night. Vivid images stick in the mind: a buoyant wedding, an uncomfortably efficient circumcision, gatherings in the synagogue where many hundreds of dark-suited, felt-hatted, bearded men are jammed into steep tiers, bobbing, swaying and murmuring.

The episode about the Mexican-American Catholics also starts out to depict customs—a Mexican Holy Week as reflected in the lives of an earnest husband and wife. Within a few moments, however, we get the feeling that something is dreadfully wrong with this couple. Soon they are telling us that they have recently joined the "Marriage Encounter" movement and that they have never been happier. As we watch them go through the awkward, prescribed routines of this movement, in which they incessantly "dialogue about their feelings" in the context of religious references, the obvious strain and the panic in their eyes are agonizing to see, particularly as they are constantly assuring us, and each other, of the new-found richness of their relationship. Their smiles are painfully intense, but they are obviously on a precipice. We wonder how this terrible situation came to be and what will happen to them next, but this alas does not come under the category of a religious experience and the film sweeps us back to the happy Mexican trumpet in the Holy Saturday procession. Here, as throughout the series, Mr. Garvin's camera, in its search for God, has missed entirely the real "spiritual experiences" of people. These come in all shapes and sizes: some, if we're lucky, are consoling and uplifting; but many of them are frightening, desperate and woven into the coarse fabric of everyday life. MICHAEL MURRAY

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an exchange of views

'Abortion: An Ecumenical Dilemma'

Minneapolis, Minn.

To the Editors: Gregory Baum's "Abortion: An Ecumenical Dilemma" [Nov. 30] raises a number of questions in my mind, particularly because I have such a high regard for him as a person and as a thinker.

I agree that a detailed critique of society is imperative as a preliminary step to ethical evaluation. Why is it, then, that the focus of attention in his article continues to be the individual hard case in the abstract and not the concrete phenomenon of millions of abortions? Why does he exhibit so much concern about people who regard abortion "under certain circumstances" as a morally good choice and devote so little time to the real issue, the promotion of a socially acceptable method of birth control which involves the violent destruction of human life on a massive scale?

At the Second Vatican Council Bishop Leven observed that ecumenism, like charity, begins at home. Why does Baum speak only of Protestants who approve abortion "under certain circumstances"? Certainly he is aware of the position of numerous Catholic theologians who would fall into the same category.

Why is it acceptable to "test the strength of a moral argument offered by a thinker by turning to the moral conclusions to which his reflections have led him on other issues," but not acceptable to argue that "wherever more sexual information and ready access to contraception are available the result has always been more abortions"? Why is Model B a matter of principle while the soundness of a philosophical argument is not?

The most revealing phrases to me are "We occasionally meet people involved in a movement against abortion . . ." and "I am uneasy with a movement against abortion that does not . . ." The overall tone of detachment from the issue and the inclination to impose his agenda on a movement make me wonder how much actual experience he has with the pro-life movement. It also makes me wonder if he accepts what people like Segundo, Gutierrez, and Friere are saying about *praxis* and about knowledge as engagement and attachment.

I know very few Catholic theologians of any stature who have put themselves on the line in the pro-life movement. Almost all of them have preferred to deal with the issue at arm's length, in abstract terms, and with an overriding concern not to disrupt ecumenical amity. The result has been a flood of articles on side issues and a feeling of discomfort with a movement which does not correspond to their preconceived notions about the issue.

The question is not: "Is it allowable 'under certain circumstances' to destroy a human being in the initial stages of his or her life?" For centuries Catholics have answered this *abstract* question in the affirmative. Rather, the question is much more concrete: "How can I, how can we, resist the violent destruction of millions of our brothers and sisters without reverting to violence ourselves?" As Calvin J. Eickhorst has put it, how do we utter a firm "no" to the violence of abortion while at the same time we say a loving "yes" to the woman in distress?

Perhaps this detachment, this lack of involvement in the movement accounts for Baum's repetition of an overworked stereotype. If a plea can do any good, I plead with Baum to retract the insinuation that pro-life people are basically Model A or, worse, "that their main concern is not really human life (they were not greatly upset about the deaths during the war) but sexual morality." Such labeling serves no purpose and it involves the sort of impugning of motives that Baum decries in his first conclusion.

If I might paraphrase him slightly, one cannot approve of the language and the arguments adopted by Baum in his defense of theologians departing from the traditional position which implies that the defenders of human life are immoral, selfish, insensitive, cruel, lacking in respect for life, or worse.

I agree with all three of Baum's conclusions and with the general thrust of his analysis, although his Model A, Model B analysis is grossly oversimplified. I hope that he will find a way to express his position with considerably less confusion.

(REV.) WILLIAM C. HUNT, S.T.D.

Huntington Beach, Calif.

To the Editors: Gregory Baum (Nov. 30) assures us that we live in ambiguous times. His vision however is clear: the Church must support contraception in order to reduce the number of abortions and not impede ecumenical discussions.

Wow!

HARVEY SHELENY

Moraga, Calif.

To the Editors: I was genuinely saddened by G. Baum's article on abortion [Nov. 30]. It will give more plausibility to that segment in the Church which thinks that ecumenism is nothing more than a watering down of official teaching for purposes of ecumenism. In the present article, they will be correct.

One cannot in a short letter point out all of the factual errors. The most

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egregious of these is that on the subject of abortion, there is "no official teaching" (p. 233). From a propaganda sheet of Planned Parenthood, one would expect such nonsense but not from a trained theologian. The fact of the matter is that the evil of abortion has been taught and preached by every Provincial and Ecumenical Council (those that mentioned the subject) in the whole history of the Church, including Vatican II, *without exception.* This can be said of very few other moral questions. Even those theologians who tried to explain the evil of abortion as a species of contraception (Traducianism vs. Evolutionism) never wavered as to the essential: that all forms of voluntary induced abortion were a heinous act before God.

Now, whether this truly universal and official teaching is right or wrong, is up to each individual to decide. It is this *sensus Catholicus* which makes us Catholics and not Protestants; and the subject of abortion belongs to that *sensus.* If that is unecumenical, then so be it and we have arrived at the scandal of contradiction, where it is infinitely more important to be faithful to the Gospel within this *sensus* than within the various worldwide models cited for us by Baum (pp. 233-234). On the question of killing, there can be no compromise or "misunderstanding," neither with some Protestant thinkers, the secular humanists, nor the radical feminists. In this respect, they are all radically opposed to the Gospel, if not intentionally, then in fact. The book of *Judges* records that one of the most disastrous periods of Jewish history was when "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." And every woman and doctor today!

A second important point I would like to make is my profound objection in calling *any* pro-abortion position "Christian," "Christian Thinker" (p. 231), "Christian Conversation" (p. 231), "a Christian way" (p. 232). This is a contradiction in terms. That is like trying to speak of killing in war in "a Christian context." It cannot be done, as the Quakers and Mennonites have shown the rest of us. We may speak of killing in an ethical context as the lesser of two evils but never in the context of the good, much less Christian. I presuppose that what we are doing in abortion is killing a form of human life. If that is not conceded, then the argument between us no longer exists. Modern genetics has shown us as much, even if the theological argument is, of course, not based on the scientific findings of genetics.

If this is granted—and the majority of pro-abortion Protestant thinkers grant it—then we can see the rather tenuous argumentation in Baum's article by changing its structure a bit: "the dilemma is that there are Christians who think that a liberal position on abortion (i.e., the deliberate killing of human life) is more moral, more in keeping with God's will, than the traditional one."

Now I would like to know how any deliberate killing of human life can be God's will, much less Christian? The argument is rationally contradictory, morally absurd and from a Christian point of view, blasphemous. Justify abortion if you will, but for God's sake don't call it "God's will" or "Christian" for cheap ecumenical gain.

This, of course, does not obviate the Catholic Church's utter disregard for the Gospel in the question of war. I feel terribly uncomfortable at anti-abortion rallies where I see those now supporting me who put me in jail a few years ago because of my anti-war activities. I have long since come to the conclusion that you are either pro-life across the board (war, capital punishment, abortion) or one refuses to live by the logic of the Gospels. Not all men are capable of this; I would like to believe with all my heart that G. Baum is one of them.

(REV.) PETER J. RIGA

Farmville, Va.

To the Editors: Congratulations on the courageous article, "Abortion: An Ecumenical Dilemma," by Gregory Baum [Nov. 30]. I wish the article had probed further in two areas, however. If, as the article declares, the Catholic Church was much later than the Protestant Churches to adopt Model B, and if "returning to Model A . . ., is theologically indefensible," isn't some consideration of conditions —perhaps still existing—in the Catholic Church which have made it less credible than Protestant Churches on matters of sexual morality necessary?

To make the Catholic Church more credible about abortion, shouldn't it *first*—in the biblical tradition of casting out the beam before attending to the neighbor's speck—attend to its own oppression of women? Furthermore, in a spirit of humility—recognizing the possibility of error concerning its abortion stand—does not the Catholic Church have a *duty* to respect the moral convictions of its Christian brethren, thereby ceasing to attempt having the practice of these convictions declared illegal (e.g., by Constitutional amendment)? What does the Vatican really mean by its recent statements about the importance of religious liberty? CAROLYN M. CRAFT

Kensington, Md.

To the Editors: Gregory Baum's "Abortion: An Ecumenical Dilemma" [Nov. 30] merits extended comment. The following brief observations, consequently, cannot adequately articulate my response to his views, but I hope that they may illumine and not inflame the discussion.

Baum first centers attention on the rhetoric of the abortion debate. Here he is quite correct. Moral questions are not settled by edict or epithet, and it does not help matters to condemn those who justify abortion for specific reasons as murderers—just as it does not help matters to characterize those

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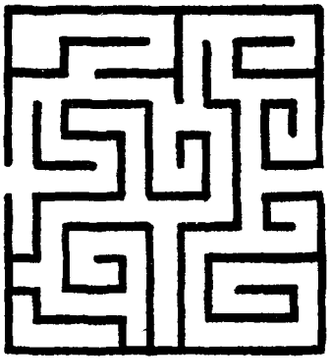
who oppose abortion as "compulsionists." It is important to recognize that many who justify abortive acts in specific instances do so because they are deeply concerned about real human suffering and real human problems, that they are not necessarily manifesting a selfish or hedonistic mentality. Yet Baum implies that opposition to abortion by Catholic moralists and by the Catholic community as a whole is always predicated on the assumption that those who seek abortions or seek to justify them do so because of selfish reasons. This implication is unwarranted and it evidences the kind of rhetoric in Baum that he rightly seeks to eliminate in others.

Baum next introduces his Models A and B as framing the context of the abortion dilemma, concluding that Model B is the framework to which the Church moved at Vatican II. I submit that his ploy in framing the question within the contexts provided by these models is a gross oversimplification, a rhetorical gimmick that obscures the central issues at stake. In addition, I submit that his understanding of human sexuality is totally inadequate, for it is an understanding, if I read him correctly, that separates *in principle* the procreative and the unitive dimensions of human sexual love, of human marital love. For understanding this question in an ecumenical perspective, I suggest that Baum read and take seriously the points developed so luminously in the works of Paul Ramsey.

Finally, I think that Baum's entire essay is an *ignoratio elenchi*, that it is sophistic to the extreme and thus destructive of genuine ecumenical theology. To substantiate my judgment here, of course, would require a very lengthy response; let it only be said that moral questions are not settled by rhetoric and counting noses and constructing artificial frameworks for viewing the issues; the same holds for the development of ecumenical theology. Baum's essay, I fear, illustrates this approach, and this is exceedingly distressing.

WILLIAM E. MAY

P.S. The writer teaches Christian ethics in the Department of Religion and Religious Education at The Catholic University of America. One of his recent publications is "Abortion and Man's Personal and Social Identity," *The Jurist* (Spring, 1973), an article in which he attempts to understand the reasons behind those who see in abortion a tragic, yet justifiable, attempt to relieve the human condition. He is also married, the father of several children, and the son of a Protestant (recently become Catholic) father.



Ann Arbor, Mich.

To the Editors: Because a substantive Catholicism encompasses more than ecumenism, Gregory Baum's intensely personal ideological quandary ["Abortion: An Ecumenical Dilemma," Nov. 30] emerges a good old-fashioned moral dilemma. Ecumenism has never meant, until now, a sell-out of objective moral values: our religious cultural heritage of faithfulness and commitment. Recent liturgical Scriptures, *cf.* Maccabees and Daniel, recall similar historical temptations. The article reads like a thesis of the Emperor Julian—a well-known theologian and author, of sorts. However, syncretism didn't help his retrenchment of paganism *vis à vis* the dynamics of the Christian creed.

Personal morals are shaped and exercised in a social and cultural milieu, and for the Christian the context is the revealed and traditional Faith which forms a moral imperative—that is the stuff of history, particularly salvation-history. Novel theological opinions justifying moral or immoral acts are, at most, a matter of semantics, and historically conditioned. Mores formed thus operate, too often, apart from and against the objective, normative moral order, and end in some kind of religious cultural relativism— a *deus ex machina* rather than a *"Deum de Deo"*—a phenomenon fraught with dilemmas, but hardly history. Gregory's dilemma is essentially the choice between traditional, biblical Christian principles, and a personalist theology constructed to circumvent the moral imperative of a Covenant of Faith.

Father Baum might have convinced some of our late brethren in the arena to have a "live and let live" attitude towards the lions—but I doubt he would have tried convincing the lions. The specious, rarefied appeal to a liberated *and* compromised post-Conciliar 'church' is, I trust, merely fuzzy-headed theologizing—or is he wheedling just one little sacrifice to the idol of irenicism at any cost?

Evil and sin do exist, and Christ, His Church, and all the martyrs stand as God's response to those realities. No theological gymnastics on abortion or any other moral issue is going to obviate them. Thanks, but I'd rather take my chances with the lions—to that end Truth has made me free!

EDWARD A. BADER, C.S.B.

Reply

Since the writers of the above letters, apart from Father Hunt, have not read my own article very carefully, I wish to repeat its three conclusions: 1) that in arguing against abortions Catholics should use a language that does not neglect the ecumenical dimension, 2) that the Catholic opposition to abortion should place itself frankly on the side of people's responsibility for their sexual lives, and 3) that moral theologians should provide a critique of the social injustices that nourish the violence of abortions. Father Hunt has understood me correctly. While my conclusions seem sound to him, he correctly sees my article as giving the reasons why many Catholics opposed to abortion are unwilling to identify themselves with an organized movement against abortion.

GREGORY BAUM

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THEOLOGIZING CONTEMPORARY EXPERIENCE

BERNARD COOKE

Liberation Theology

ROSEMARY RUETHER

Paulist Press, $3.95 (*Paper*)

Rosemary Ruether's new book, *Liberation Theology*, demonstrates the broad scope and the basic nature of current theological discussion of liberation. Her chapters, most of which had been published as magazine articles during the past five years, deal with such varied topics as women's status in the church, the counterculture, black theology, ecumenical relations between Christians and Jews, clerical celibacy, and the dilemma of the "liberal" in today's society. The fact that such a range of material can without artificiality be studied under the rubric of "liberation theology" indicates the fundamental character of theological study of liberation.

As a matter of fact, when one reflects about it, there should be nothing particularly innovative about theologians directing their attention to "liberation." The biblical texts of both Israel and early Christianity make it quite clear that God's saving action in history is essentially a matter of liberating humans from the various evils that would enslave them—and Jewish and Christian traditions are not alone in emphasizing this notion of liberation. Since theology's task is to clarify and deepen the understanding of God as he reveals himself in his action on mankind's behalf, all theological endeavor could be subsumed under the notion of "liberation theology."

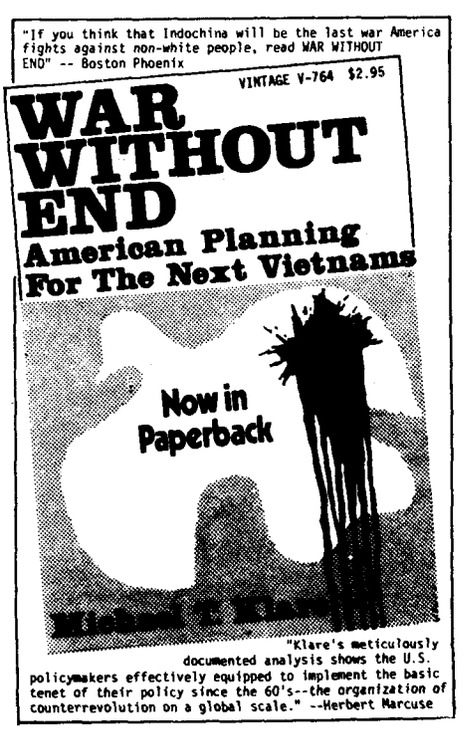
This is not to say that the history of Christian theology has seen a consistent attention to the process of human liberation; *structures* rather than *process* have tended to attract theologians' attention. Nor is it to say that there is nothing new and worthwhile about today's theological discussion of liberation. What is quite new is the realization that important phenomena of liberation in today's world provide the starting point for theological reflection; such phenomena are "word of God" precisely because they are the most revelatory *loci* of God's saving (i.e., liberating) activity. Rosemary Ruether's book is a good example of such use of contemporary experience as a source of theological reasoning.

Theology done in this manner—using current situations of liberation as a point of departure for theological reflection—certainly contributes to a creative development of theological method; but it is threatened by several dangers. This does not mean that such theologizing should be done fearfully or with less than complete honesty; it does mean that it must be done carefully, since superficial or tendentious judgments about a given situation of liberation will obscure or pervert the "revelation" contained in that situation.

Because such instances of liberation —whether from racial prejudice or sexual discrimination or economic oppression—occur within the political and economic and social processes of human life, it is difficult for a theologian to avoid being controlled by some ideology: either one's supposedly "objective" appraisal of the situation is influenced by ideological presuppositions; or one confuses humanistic ideology with theology in one's reflections on the situation; or one's sympathy for and identification with a given disadvantaged group inclines one to adopt somewhat uncritically the ideological viewpoints that are prominent in this group.

Ruether's book is not entirely free from these dangers. In particular, theological analysis (in the sense of approaching an understanding of human phenomena from the viewpoint of divine influence on these phenomena) seems in many instances to be replaced by an ideological appraisal. "Ideological" in this context should not be taken to mean "biased" or "unbalanced"; as a matter of fact, Ruether's treatment of emotion-laden topics like the "oppressor/oppressed" dialectic (p. 9) or "black theology" (in chap. 9) are quite notable for their even-handedness. But the book does raise the question (which, of course, is a basic question for anyone who would do theology in a down-to-earth fashion): when exactly is one speaking or writing in a genuinely theological framework?

One can point to places in the book where the theological nature of the discourse in quite clear—as on p. 34, where there is discussion of the counterculture as prophetic, or on p. 166, which relates the revelatory aspect of contemporary struggles to traditional questions about nature and grace and "new being." But on the other hand, a great deal of the reflection that is carried on in the book seems to be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more sociological or political, and to be controlled by a definite ideological option. Perhaps a key to the method and viewpoint of the book is provided by the enthusiastic summation of Arend van Leeuwen's ideas (pp. 188-191): Christianity (in van Leeuwen's perspective), both in its nature and in its historical evolution, tends to be absorbed into the broader category (and "religious" reality) of revolutionary messianism.

In any treatment like Rosemary Ruether's, which strives for insight through reflection on historical happenings, past or present, it becomes critically important to read history accurately. Sweeping generalizations and oversimplified attribution of historical occurrences to this or that cause make it difficult to discern correctly the "word of revelation" conveyed by history; for, if history is truly revelatory and therefore the source of theological insight, only the actual dynamics of history (which may or may not coincide with our subjective reading of those dynamics) are "word of God."

To accuse Ruether's book of any such distorting generalizations may seem unjust, for it suggests that one (in this case the reviewer) can confidently substitute his own reading of history for hers. Aware of this problem, let me simply indicate some areas where I feel more than a little uneasy with socio-historical judgments that are given as explanation for our present-day situation: "Constantinianism" is made to bear a great deal of the blame for the undesirable developments in western Christianity. Though it is commonly admitted that many non-evangelical features of the church became more prominent from mid-fourth century onward and that application of "the political model" to Christianity had much to do with this, there are some important indications that this process had begun long before Constantine and was linked partially to Christianity's Jewish roots. Again, the explanation of monasticism in its origins as a reaction to the Constantinian domestication of the church within the world needs a great deal of qualification—if not denial; and it is certainly a one-sided judgment that institutionalized religious orders had a life-style that was deliberately impersonal and "their work focused primarily on institutional self-preservation rather than free or prophetic service" (p. 44). Or again, though it is not expressed quite that bluntly, one gets the impression that Christianity is to be explained as the syncretism of Jewish apocalypticism and Gnostic negativism.

If one turns from "historical" explanations of how the church got to be as bad as it is, and examines the non-religious grounds for the less desirable elements in present-day society, Rosemary Ruether's book seems to espouse a certain subtle anti-science view. That contemporary man is threatened in the deepest levels of his personal existing by possible abuse of science and technology is incontestable. Yet to see scientific culture (p. 29) or the machine culture (p.31) as *the* root of oppression and alienation, as the counter-culture does, is ideological oversimplification whose inadequacy needs to be challenged; and Ruether's treatment (e.g. pp. 36, 148, 164) seems to support rather than question such judgments.

All this may sound like carping and ungracious criticism of a book that deserves to be commended because it straightforwardly addresses itself to so many of the real issues in our world. Yet, it is precisely because Rosemary Ruether touches on so many of the real problem areas in the world (and in the church) that one must ask whether her explanation of the historical genesis of these problems is correct. If we are to work towards some basic resolution of these problems, then we must understand quite accurately the roots out of which these problems have grown.

Earlier in this review I raised the question of theological method, and before concluding I would like to come back to a basic question that much current theologizing raises for one who considers himself a Christian theologian—Rosemary Ruether's book helped me see more clearly the radical character and the inescapability of the question. How seriously does one take traditional belief in the absolute uniqueness and historical centrality of Jesus and of his redeeming death and resurrection?

Somehow I cannot get the feel that Ruether's book recognizes such uniqueness; there seems to be little recognition, if any, that the Incarnation and the resurrection of Jesus are the key to human liberation. Granting the critical importance of the social and psychological factors that Ruether highlights (for example, on p. 172: "The emergence of new creative forces hinges on the formation of a mediating group combining sensitivity to injustice, an access to power, and the political and organizational expertise to turn demands into realities."), I miss the mention of what seems to me of basic importance in the Christian view of liberation: the creative vision that comes with the Christian reinterpretation of life and death. Nor is it simply a matter of omission; to say that Christianity's "central doctrine of Christology falls more and more into doubt" (p. 81) seems to misstate the current theological endeavor (by men like Schoonenberg) to re-examine and reformulate the deepest traditions of Christian faith in the Christ-event. Methodologically, Rosemary Ruether's book seems to reflect the movement away from Jesus of Nazareth as the fundamental "word" which the Christian theologian must hear and then explain.

Heartland

SAUL MALOFF

Scribners, $6.95

LEONARD KRIEGEL

These are not the most comfortable times in recent memory to be both American and Jew. The skeleton in the closet looms visibly once again. Philosophers, cultists, moralists, soulmates of the Shelleyan accession—all grow increasingly aware of that older figure in their midst, the Jew. As the old Yiddish saying has it, "In the warmest of hearts, there is a cold spot for the Jew."

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A rather arbitrary note with which to begin a review of a novel. But *Heartland* left me amused, irritated, and ultimately dissatisfied, and I suspect that part of my response is rooted in the fact that I read it as Egyptian tanks rolled into the Sinai and concluded it as I listened to the rising note of irritation with Jews and their problems that one heard in New York's streets all through October. Not the best of atmospheres in which to confront Saul Maloff's stubborn insistence that we be challenged by yet another intellectual, one Isaiah Greene. What amazes me is that Saul Maloff comes so close to pulling it off. *Heartland* is brilliantly written. Maloff possesses an unerring ear and his prose possesses something more than energy and something more than style; it is explosive, at times dazzling, and it left me with more than a touch of envy. The *tam* is genuine, the gifts from the Yiddish discernible.

And yet, I cannot get over my sense of having been short-changed. No matter how good, prose is not enough. Not only have I been taken into the *Heartland* before—novels are supposed to create life, geography is intended to introduce us to places—but I'm no longer certain that the trip is worth it, perhaps because I'm tired of philosophical Jewish intellectuals who are never so "Jewish" as in their need to tickle the collective American stomach. The difficulty with Isaiah Greene is not simply that he made his appearance at a time which television commentators refer to as "this latest outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East"; the difficulty is that he is so much the stuff of caricature as to be one-dimensional. Even if Maloff does this intentionally, it doesn't work. Strip Bellow or Mailer of his prose and the reader is still left with characters who possess the potential of life. (This is no longer true of Mailer, if only because the subject matter of his latest book was herself one-dimensional, which reduces Mailer to a man creating a myth about an image: imagine the Ajax white knight as Sir Gawain and you can better appreciate Mailer's problem.) Strip *Heartland* of its prose and one is left with the shell of a Jewish joke.

Isaiah Greene is a forty-year-old literary critic perspiring his way through an adult education course at Hunter College, where his students are considerably less concerned than he about entering Dante's "dark wood." Walking home one summer evening (like all good Jewish intellectuals, he lives on the West Side of this Eastern city), he finds himself swept up, against his will, in a demonstration of Jewish militants before the Soviet Mission to the United Nations. At the demonstration, Isaiah discovers television interviewers for the eleven o'clock news, sports a brilliantly embroidered yarmulke which is thrust on his head, and connects with a gorgeous High Church Episcopalian "philosemite" with the delicious name of Shoshana MacDonald. In his most ecumenical fantasies, Isaiah feels an indiscriminate lech for shiksas of any kind, and shiksas, particularly High Church Episcopalian "philosemites," are apparently eager to match Isaiah strut for strut and line for line. Isaiah and Shoshana form a union and are soon blessed by the lure of television interviews and lecture fees, all because of their appearance on the eleven o'clock news.

But all good things come to an end, and Isaiah learns that "on the mountain top a man can die of exposure." He wearily approaches his final stop on the lecture tour, a "Rocky Mountain Radcliffe," one Donner Pass College for Women, a memorial to cannibalism, the WASP, the WEST, and a segment of America for which Isaiah, as Easterner, Jew, and literary critic, feels both attraction and repulsion. To his credit, Isaiah learns. In the course of his learning, he is engulfed by "lovely, well bred *and* carnivorous" girls, whereas a fellow symposiast, a poet named Lionel Fox, is designated as the sacrificial Jew. Isaiah emerges from all of this a wiser if more tired man. Fox emerges apparently dispossessed of his member and apparently all the better for the loss. Isaiah, who has vehemently argued against Fox's Us-Them dichotomizing, departs from the West and its cannibalistic shiksas for New York and his own Shoshana.

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REVIEWERS

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In New York, at least, evil is a collectivity shared by the outlaws and the protectors. Here one can find philosemitic shiksas, good conversation, and tuna and eggs. Not much to live for, but, as Isaiah has learned, "a bite in the West, a banquet in the East."

Saul Maloff has written a novel in which language is the gauge of its own argument. Isaiah rejects Fox's Us-Them, but his rejection remains ineffectual in ths reader's eyes. Isaiah Greene is an ecumenical soul; he wants a world of undifferentiated reasonableness. Castrated or not, Fox is a poet, and if his sense of reality is that of "a lucid paranoiac," it may be the best way to view a world in which lucid paranoia floats in the air around us. But Fox, like Isaiah himself, is so one-dimensional that his point-of-view seems disembodied. And this is where the novel's argument goes sour.

Saul Maloff's *Heartland* is an explosion of language and humor, a surrealistic war between WASP and Jew, between EAST and WEST, between categories barricaded against one another. But this is not enough. Even novels about New York Jewish intellectuals must be populated by real people. In *Heartland*, JEW and WASP, EAST and WEST, have been reduced to convenient categories. And even with Saul Maloff's distinctive talents, such categories succeed merely in neutralizing reality.

The Church Today

". . . CHRIST NEVER promised success as most Americans understand it. He promised the cross, a share in his cup of suffering, and his abiding presence as long as we gathered in his name and loved one another.

"The church, therefore, is ourselves—good and bad, relevant and irrelevant—the community of those who try to remain committed to the message of Jesus. So, if the church in its members is ignorance and intellectual oppression, satin-slippered monsignori and pastors in Cadillacs on the way to the race track or golf course, it is also the Curé of Ars, and, in our own time—with all their faults—John XXIII, the Berrigans and Kennedys, Drinan, Dozier, Dorothy Day, and that unknown young man or woman in college or working in a factory, who wants to be better and sees in Jesus and his community a way to grow and serve. Leave this community and Christ remains an option; stay, and he remains a demand."

—*Commonweal*, January 19, 1973

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WAYNE ANDREWS

As Voltaire did not need to be told, the man who cast the longest shadow on France in the eighteenth century was Louis XIV. We may reprimand him for fighting one war too many, we may wonder why he enriched Prussia and so many other countries by forcing the Huguenots into exile, but we can never forget the prestige to which he had raised French civilization on his death in 1715. In fact, Louis XIV might be compared to a millionaire whose investments were so shrewd that his great-grandchildren could indulge in almost any extravagance: the history of France from 1715 to 1789 is that of a nation living on the capital he amassed, with one uninspired administrator following another. As for Louis XV and Louis XVI, their incompetence was too obvious to be worth an argument.

And since the wonders of the art and architecture of France in the eighteenth century would have been inconceivable without the foundation laid by Louis XIV, you might assume that the accomplishments of his reign would be properly acknowledged by the authors of the new Penguin volume on this subject.

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Unfortunately, however, neither Mr. Michael Levey nor Count Kalnein seem to have any understanding of the prestige of the Sun King. Count Kalnein will have it, on no authority but his own, that the War of the Spanish Succession "shook the country to its very foundations." He forgets that the French kept on fighting for nine years after Blenheim. Mr. Levey is equally supercilious, claiming that France under Louis XIV, "owing to Colbert's policy of subordinating the arts to the state, had become out of step and out of date, compared wih the rest of Europe."

Was French civilization "out of step and out of date?" Frederick the Great would scarcely have agreed with Mr. Levey. As we all know, he scandalously neglected his own language at the very moment when Germany was about to create one of the great literatures of the world, and when not collecting choice examples of Watteau for his palace at Potsdam, tried desperately, much to the amusement of Voltaire, to become a master of French prose and verse.

As you might imagine from their dismissal of Louis XIV, Messrs. Kalnein and Levey are art historians who will have nothing to do with history. Louis XV and Louis XVI remain no more than statues in a museum they will never visit, and the great authors of the century, who might have been called upon for an enlightening quotation or two, are cited as though they were merely names in a biographical dictionary deposited in a library closed to the public. All this should not be taken to cast any slur on the scholarship of the authors. A vast number of minor architects, painters and sculptors have been disinterred, and there is good reason to believe that they memorized page after page of the formidable Thieme-Becker lexicon.

But if Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, Falconet, Pajou, Houdon, Boffrand, Gabriel, and Ledoux—to name only a few of the great artists of the century—are to haunt us today, we must know something about the world they lived in. On this subject our authors are silent. We are given no inkling, for example, that Falconet's erotic sculptures —strangely like the pin-up girls in Playboy magazine—betray a climate in which a woman is no longer a woman but only an object. Once woman has become an object, we have reached the point where unholy reverence is paid to heroic virtues. Falconet, doubtless to the amazement of Catherine the Great, will celebrate Peter the Great as administrator in the great statue in St. Petersburg, and Ledoux will plan the ideal, and heroic town of Chaux.

But Messrs. Kalnein and Levey never realize that the French Revolution is about to take place, and don't even suspect the sinister charm of High Noon, when the ideal of absolute justice comes to be worshipped with a wonderful indifference to the consequences. This might have been made quite clear with a sentence or two from the writings of Ledoux, but it is obvious that an architect's philosophy is of no interest to Count Kalnein.

What does seem of great interest to Count Kalnein is the question of the eastern frontier of the French Republic. He is most melancholy when he reflects that Lorraine is today in French hands, and sighs over the "final loss of its independence" in 1766. Possibly he believes that Alsace-Lorraine was better off in the days when it was a *Reichsland* subject to the rule of William II. We are told on the jacket that the Count visited France during the last war under Nazi auspices, having the honor to be a Fine Arts Officer on the "famous staff" of Count Metternich. It is true that Metternich was dismissed in October, 1943 after showing some resistance to the plundering of Hermann Göring. Possibly, just possibly, Kalnein shared the misgivings of his superior officer. In any event, the problem of Alsace-Lorraine might have been edited out of this volume; the space might have been devoted to the work of L'Enfant and other French architects in the New World, none of whom are mentioned.

While Messrs. Kalnein and Levey have taken the trouble to remind us of what happens to art history when divorced from history, Professor Robert L. Herbert of the Yale art history department has done us the favor of providing us with a monograph on David's painting of Brutus in which we relive, day by day, the French Revolution as witnessed by a great artist. Art history, as written by Mr. Herbert becomes alive: we are made to realize just why David chose the subject of the Roman hero who sentenced his own sons to death for joining the plot to bring back the exiled Tarquin. And we also are made to understand why David took so much interest in the revival in 1790 of Voltaire's play on this theme. No wonder we can imagine the passion the painter spent in 1794 on organizing the Festival of the Supreme Being.

If only Messrs. Kalnein and Levey had given us anything like the insights of Mr. Herbert.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 379)

anyone, but to ask that we read her again not only for her exquisite awareness in the poetry of survival but for the poetry and the poem itself. A good way to begin is to read *Trilogy*, published by New Directions.

THOMAS P. MCDONNELL
Staff Writer, *The Pilot*

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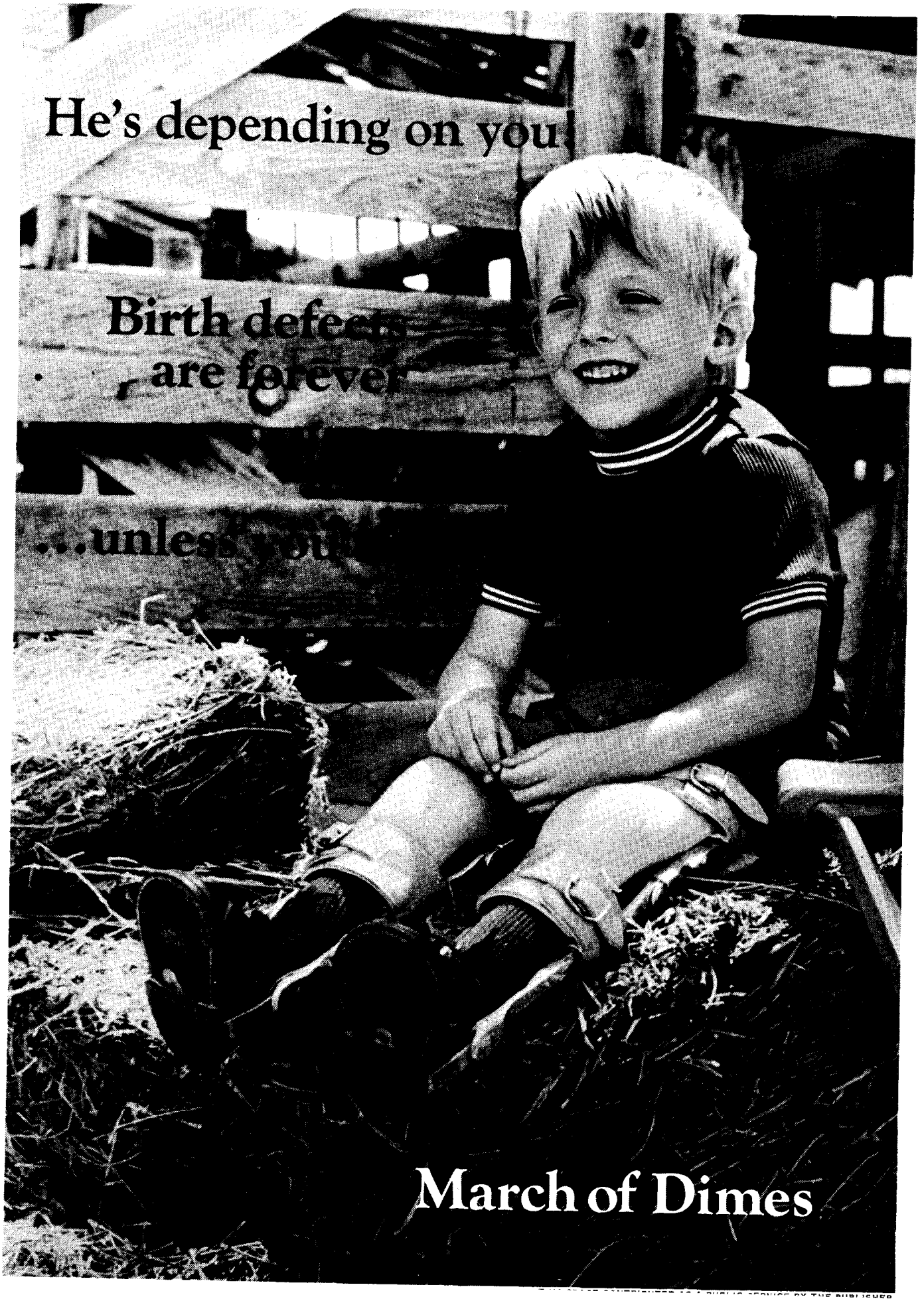

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